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rear roof slopes of the building; the simplicity of the roof form is masked by the scale and location of the dormers. A third modification is the enclosure of the side porch of the left elevation. The heavy, exposed timber-frame porch was intended to replicate the framing of sixteenth-century English buildings. The encapsulation of this building element masks one of the dominant features of the Tudor Revival.

Eligibility Recommendation

The dwelling at 406 Great Falls Road does not possess the qualities of significance and integrity to merit further consideration for eligibility as a single-site historic district within the City of Rockville. Eligibility requires that the resource hold significance within an historic context and retain integrity to the period of significance. Under Criterion 1, the dwelling does not hold significant associations with the theme of suburban expansion and the growth of Rockville in the middle- and later-decades of the twentieth century. The dwelling was also evaluated under Criterion 2. Archival research failed to identify any significant associations with individuals important in local or state history. Under Criteria 4 and 9, the dwelling does not retain sufficient integrity to embody the distinctive characteristics of a particular style, period, or method of construction. The replacement or removal of significant character-defining features; the addition of shed dormers; and the enclosure of the timber-frame porch compromise the integrity of design, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling.

408 Great Falls Road

General Description

Constructed ca. 1940, the building at 408 Great Falls Road is a two-story, three-bay, masonry-veneer dwelling interpreted in a vernacular Colonial Revival style (Figure 8). The building lies within a landscaped yard and is oriented to the northwest. A brick-veneer foundation supports the building, which terminates in a moderately-pitched, side-gable roof covered in slate. Openings of the façade include a door with detailed architrave and two one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash replacement windows with snap-in, six-light grilles.

The façade is pierced by a centrally located six-panel door with decorative architrave. Details include a reproduction hood and fluted pilasters. Two windows flank the door on the first floor. The windows are one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash replacement windows with six-light, snap-in grilles and permanently mounted synthetic shutters. The shutters are installed in the opposite orientation of historic use. Windows of the second floor include vinyl replacement windows directly above those of the first floor, and a one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash replacement window with four-light, snap-in grilles over the door. The eaves terminate in an aluminum clad cornice and box soffit. Aluminum sheeting covers the historic, molded cornice.



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Figure 8. 408 Great Falls Road, west elevation.

The left elevation is defined by a screen porch and an exterior, end chimney (Figure 9). The porch is accessed by a ten-light door on both the first and second levels. One-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash replacement windows with six-light, snap-in grilles fill the other openings of each level of the elevation. Synthetic shutters flank the openings. The porch is covered by a shed roof clad with rolled-asphalt and encircled by a wood balustrade of tapered posts and simple, horizontal rail. The posts and rail are apparent replacements. The end chimney is centrally located and terminates in a corbelled cap. The aluminum-covered cornice exhibits slight returns, and the verge boards are also covered with metal sheathing.

The right side elevation contains an enclosed porch located above a two-car garage located on the basement level (Figure 10). Porch fenestration is composed of triple, one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash replacement windows with six-light, snap-in grilles. The front and rear walls contain a single, three-sash unit; two units are located on the side walls. The frame walls of the porch are clad with aluminum siding. A multi-light wooden door accesses the porch from the dwelling. The second floor contains two openings; a twelve-light door and a one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash replacement window with six-light, snap-in grilles. A similar window fills the apex of the gable wall. All openings are framed by permanently-mounted synthetic shutters. The garage is accessed through a full-width, sectional overhead door. The cornice returns and verge board are clad in aluminum sheathing.



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Figure 9. 408 Great Falls Road, north elevation.



Figure 10. 408 Great Falls Road, south elevation.



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The rear elevation is pierced by a nine-light door and one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash replacement windows with six-light, snap-in grilles (Figure 11). The door is sheltered by a shed-roofed, screened porch. A shed dormer breaks the rear slope of the roof. The dormer walls are clad in aluminum siding. The dormer contains three, one-over-one, double-hung, vinyl-sash replacement windows with six-light, snap-in grilles. The dormer roof is clad in standing-seam metal.

The interior of the building displays a modified, central-passage plan. The large parlor to the left of the hall opens onto the screened porch and features a central fireplace with a Colonial Revival mantel. The dining room and kitchen lie to the right of the hall. The rooms contain moderate levels of detailing with a molded crown and baseboard. Three bedrooms are located on the second level. These rooms also display limited detailing with simple window surrounds and baseboards.

Evaluation of 408 Great Falls Road

The Historic District Commission of the City of Rockville has established criteria for local historical designation, which includes multi-resource districts and single-source districts. The Historic District Commission generally holds single-site districts to a higher standard than the assemblage of buildings that contribute to a multi-resource district (Rockville, Maryland 2005b). Designation of a single-site historic district is based on the historical, cultural, and architectural significance of the resource.

Significance

To determine if 406 Great Falls Road meets historic district eligibility requirements established by the City of Rockville, it is necessary to analyze its significance and integrity. Historical or cultural significance is evaluated through nine criteria identified by the Historic District Commission:

1. Structures and sites associated with events significant in Rockville, Montgomery County, Maryland, or national history and social development.
2. Structures and sites associated with the lives of persons making significant contributions in Rockville, Montgomery County, Maryland, or national history.
3. Structures and sites associated with the development of the culture of a particular local ethnic group.
4. Architectural Significance
5. Structures attributed to architects and/or known builders of acknowledged local or national prominence.
6. Structures of distinctive quality as evaluated by recognized authorities.
7. Structures that are definitive examples of a particular style, period or method of construction.



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Figure 11. 408 Great Falls Road, east elevation.

8. Structures which are among the last surviving examples of a particular style, period or method of construction.
9. Structures which embody the distinctive characteristics of a particular style, period or method of construction and which possess those characteristics of visual relatedness which collectively create a sense of the whole within a district or help deem a structure or site worthy of individual designation (Rockville, Maryland 2005b).

In order to meet Historic District Commission eligibility requirements under Criterion 1, a property must be associated with events significant in Rockville, Montgomery County, Maryland, or national history and social development (Rockville, Maryland 2005b). The dwelling at Great Falls Road is associated with one theme in history: suburban expansion and the growth of Rockville in the middle- and later-decades of the twentieth century.

The theme of suburban expansion relates to the twentieth-century movement of population from densely populated urban cores to the once-rural land bounding the cities. Architects, real estate developers, builders, social reformers, and public officials embarked on a program of neighborhood improvements and home ownership in the years following World War I. Enhancements in transportation, such as street railways and macadamized roads, prompted the construction of planned communities incorporating a uniform scheme of design, lot size, setback, and amenities. By the late 1920s, landscape architects established themselves as professionals in the field of subdivision design. Social reformers called for sensitivity to low- and moderate-



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income homebuyers, and leaders in the garden club movement urged the incorporation of aesthetically-pleasing landscaping into the overall design. By the 1930s, the federal government began publishing plan books and instituted national standards for home and subdivision design (National Park Service 2002: 59).

Printed out
 The National Park Service established guidelines for evaluating suburban communities in 2002 with the publication of *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places*. The National Register program defines a historic residential suburb as:

A geographic area, usually located outside the central city, that was historically connected to the city by one or more modes of transportation; subdivided and developed primarily for residential use according to a plan; and possessing a significant concentration, linkage, and continuity of dwellings on small parcels of land, roads and streets, utilities, and community facilities (National Park Service 2002:4)

An historic residential suburb can be identified through the observation of six character defining features:

- Relationship to transportation routes and other factors influencing location of the subdivision
- Site plan and subdivision design
- Character and condition of housing
- Distinctive aspects of landscape design
- Presence of community facilities, such as schools and stores
- Patterns of social history (National Park Service 2002:86-87)

The area of Rockville along Great Falls Road does not exhibit the character defining features of a historic residential suburb. The great variety in lot size, setback, building style, and date of construction is indicative of an area that developed without a pre-conceived plan or design. Rockville grew slowly in the middle decades of the twentieth century and did not experience large growth rates until the 1950s and 1960s. Development patterns during the first half of the century reflect moderate growth outward from the city center with most buildings lining transportation corridors and new building lots created from the subdivision of larger holdings. The variety of building styles and dates of construction implies a continual division of land into progressively smaller lots culminating with the small lots holding houses from the 1960s and 1970s. This parallels the natural growth and evolution of the city rather than planned expansion through suburbanization. The "significant concentration, linkage, and continuity of dwellings on small parcels of land" within the National Register program's definition of a historic residential suburb is not present in the area around Great Falls Road and Monument Avenue.



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The dwelling at 408 Great Falls Road is associated only with one other dwelling. Both 406 and 408 Great Falls Road were built ca. 1940 by brothers William T. and James B. Nicholson. The land on which they built was a portion of the holdings of James Brawner and Mary T. Nicholson, who assembled the land in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Family tradition holds that the brothers, nephews of the elder Nicholson, constructed their homes about one year apart with James building 406 Great Falls around 1939, and William constructing 408 about two years later. This is plausible, although both acquired their land in 1941, and it is likely that the houses were erected after that date. This private acquisition and construction of houses on isolated parcels does not comport to the six characteristics defined by the National Park Service guidelines.

The dwelling at 408 Great Falls Road was also evaluated under Historic District Commission Criterion 2 for association with the lives of persons making significant contributions to Rockville, Montgomery County, Maryland, or national history (Rockville, Maryland 2005b). Research has yielded no specific information about the activities of the Nicholson family or their impact, and no scholarly judgement can be made about historic importance.

In order to merit further consideration for eligibility under Historic District Commission Criteria 4 or 9 a property must embody the distinctive characteristics of a particular style, period, or method of construction (Rockville, Maryland 2005b). The building is an example of the Colonial Revival style, an architectural interpretation that emerged in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. The opening of the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876 prompted a redirection of architectural thought. Exhibits detailing the growth of the United States, the early settlers, the heroes of the revolution, and the buildings of past presidents created an increased awareness of the origins of the nation and a newly born aesthetic. The Colonial Revival style became increasingly popular in the later decades of the nineteenth and the beginning of the early-twentieth centuries. The style stills captures homebuyers to this day, as many modern subdivisions add elements of the style in sidelights and fanlights, and trim. The style also found widespread application in public, institutional, and educational buildings for its inherent sense of pride and respectability.

Early Colonial Revival designs borrowed elements from several earlier styles, featuring porticoes and pediments of the Greek Revival, sidelights and fanlights of the Federal, and paneled doors and multi-paned windows of the Georgian. Sub-categories of the style imitated the earliest Colonial buildings. The Garrison Colonial Revival included the projecting upper level timber-framed buildings constructed in Massachusetts in the seventeenth century. The incorporation of various design elements oftentimes failed to execute fully the style of the original building. Sidelights occurred without the associated fanlights; paired windows, oversized gable dormers, or full-length shed dormers were often utilized. Other expressions of the Colonial Revival style mixed various elements, such as the Colonial jetty combined with a Federal frontispiece. Ornamental details applied to Colonial Revival buildings frequently exaggerated the historic

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model on which the building was based. Jack arches with large keystones, cornices embellished with dentils and modillions, or hipped roofs are common among the more ornate examples of the style.

The closing years of the nineteenth century brought a change to the Colonial Revival building. Published in 1898, *The American Architect and Building News* began a series of articles entitled "The Georgian Period: Being photographs and measured drawings of Colonial Work with text." Provided with accurate depictions of authentic Colonial dwellings, architects and builders began to closely replicate the earlier buildings, simplifying details and attempting to maintain the proportion and scale of seventeenth-and eighteenth-century dwellings (McAlester 1989: 326). Additional impetus for accuracy arose from the work of several architects who undertook the restoration or remodeling of early dwellings. One of the most well-known of these architects was R. Brognard Okie of Philadelphia. Focusing on residential buildings of the Federal and Colonial periods, Okie completed projects as far away as Kentucky, yet dealt primarily with buildings of the mid-Atlantic region (AIA Philadelphia). Okie gained a reputation for his use of native stone and his attention to accuracy. His High (Market) Street project for the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial Exposition of 1926 reconstructed an entire Colonial street and gained widespread acclaim (Philadelphia Architects and Buildings).

Architects, such as Okie, strove to accurately depict early dwellings, yet the restoration of Colonial and Federal buildings remained an interpretive undertaking. Historic fabric was often removed in an attempt to create a unified appearance. The restoration itself oftentimes proved interpretive, as a sound body of research addressing the evolution of the cultural landscape did not exist. Materials from numerous buildings frequently contributed to a single project creating a mix of styles, hierarchy of detail, and loss of historic setting. While modern preservationists may feel these techniques inappropriate, it brought early architecture to the public eye. The popularity of these projects revitalized interest in Colonial buildings, and awareness likely preserved many that would otherwise have been lost.

In addition to its popularity as a locally-constructed architectural type, the Colonial Revival figured prominently in design books and mail-order houses. Buyers could choose an entire house, or incorporate specific elements such as sun rooms, porticos, or mantels (Athenaeum 1991). This eclectic assemblage of features created a wide range of buildings that bore similarities to both the colonial precedent as well as houses popular in the late-nineteenth century such as the Queen Anne and Stick styles. Although pattern books and mail-order catalogs were popular sources of inspiration for builders of Colonial Revival homes, the building at 408 Great Falls Road was not identified in a review of available sources.

The Colonial Revival remained popular in the decades prior to World War II with new variants becoming popular. The side gambrel roof and garrison types achieved their greatest acceptance after 1920, peaked in the 1930s, yet continued as popular forms until the post-war years. Brick

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veneer construction, introduced around 1915, allowed for less-costly masonry homes, and vernacular expressions of two-story Colonial dwellings appeared in large numbers. The economic impact of the Great Depression severely curtailed housing construction, and homes built during that time were smaller in size, usually only a single story, and expressed an austerity of design that carried into the middle of the twentieth century. Oftentimes these basic Colonial Revival dwellings are only identifiable by an architrave surrounding the principal entrance. As new forms gained popularity, others declined. The front gambrel variant, constructed in large numbers between 1890 and 1920, was replaced by the side gambrel frequently constructed with full-width shed dormers to increase the available space of the second level. Construction of homes with the highly ornate, often exaggerated details seen in the earliest examples of the style gradually declined and virtually disappeared during the economic crisis of the 1930s.

Changing postwar fashions furthered the simplification of the style. Multi-light windows gave way to single- or double-light sashes. The frontispiece, once one of the most ornate features of the style, lost many details such as the leaded glass sidelights and fanlight. Vernacular expressions of the Colonial entrance took the form of a raised panel door, often featuring a series of small lights in the upper half, a molded architrave, and a triangular pediment.

In order to meet Historic District Commission eligibility requirements under Criteria 4 or 9, a property must embody the distinctive characteristics of a particular style, period, or method of construction. The Colonial Revival style was not uncommon in the first half of the twentieth century. The example at 408 Great Falls Road is a mid-twentieth century example that lacks the ornamental and stylistic features seen in Colonial Revival buildings constructed in the earlier part of the century. The symmetrical façade, two-story mass, brick-veneer wall cladding, and Colonial-inspired frontispiece contribute to the stylistic character of the building; however, the building lacks other attributes of the style such as the portico, sidelights, fanlight, and detailed arches above doors and windows. Modifications to the building have removed other features. The wooden cornice is obscured by aluminum sheathing, and vinyl-sash windows replace the original multi-light, wood sash.

Integrity

Due to the simplification of the style since its introduction at the close of the nineteenth century, the features that define the character of a Colonial Revival have become more discrete. The retention of these features, therefore, becomes paramount in the definition of the style. Additional factors in considering integrity are the age of the resource and the number of examples in a geographic area.

There are numerous examples of Colonial Revival in the vicinity of 408 Great Falls Road. An informal windshield survey conducted the week of September 12th identified over 15 buildings in the immediate vicinity that exhibit similar stylistic attributes (Figures 12-14). Many of these

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Figure 12. Colonial Revival residence with high integrity, Adams Street.



Figure 13. Colonial Revival residence with high integrity, Adams Street.



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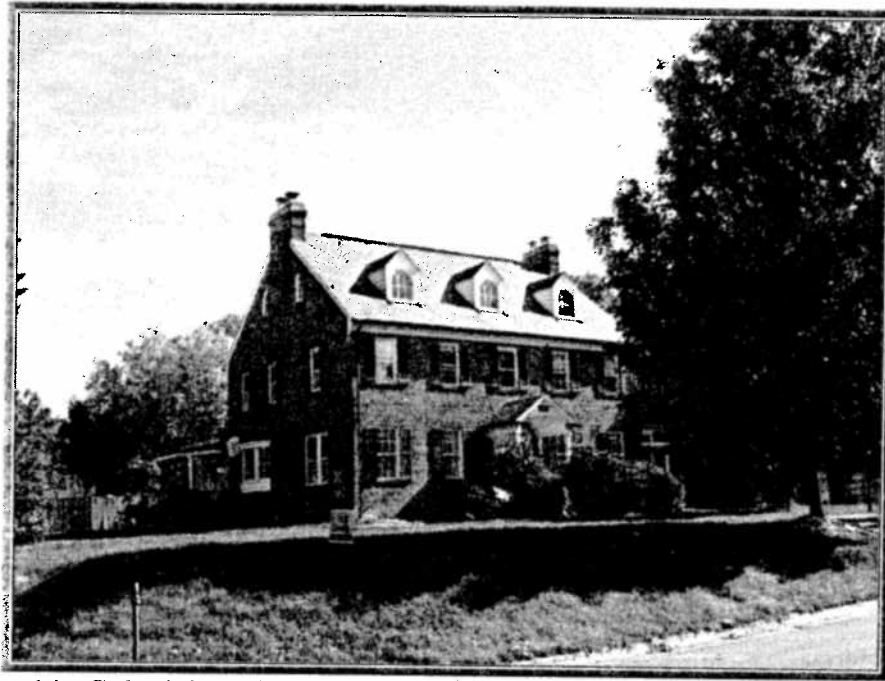


Figure 14. Colonial Revival residence with high integrity, Monument Avenue.

date from the early and middle decades of the twentieth century and represent the development and maturation of the style. Other examples are indicative of planned, suburban development.

A resource of the recent past is expected to retain a high level of integrity that adequately represents the era of construction. Minor changes in materials, such as replacement trim or flashing, is expected; however, the total replacement of a building element seriously affects the ability of the resource to represent its type, period, or method of construction. The use of multi-light windows was one of the defining features of the Colonial Revival style until after World War II. Other features include the scale and form of the building; its materials; and its use of reproduction ornamental details. While 408 Great Falls Road retains its basic form and scale, the replacement of all windows with vinyl sash seriously compromises the integrity of materials, design, workmanship, and feeling. The integrity of the original design is compromised further by the removal and/or sheathing of the building's cornice, soffit, and vergeboards.

Eligibility Recommendation

The dwelling at 408 Great Falls Road does not possess the qualities of significance and integrity to merit further consideration for eligibility as a single-site historic district within the City of Rockville. Eligibility requires that the resource hold significance within an historic context and retain integrity to the period of significance. Under Criterion 1, the dwelling does not hold significant associations with the theme of suburban expansion and the growth of Rockville in the



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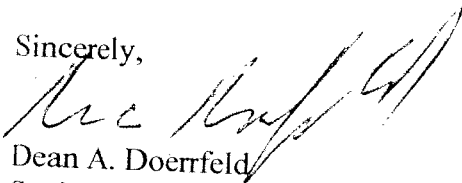
Summary and Conclusions

The history of the buildings was compiled through research and analysis of primary and secondary sources. Architectural, archival, and field-derived data were analyzed in accordance with criteria established by the Rockville Historic District Commission for eligibility as Historic Districts. The buildings were assessed for the qualifications of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Significance was evaluated against applicable criteria. The buildings at 406 and 408 Great Falls Road do not hold associations with events significant in Rockville, Montgomery County, Maryland, or national history and social development; are not associated with the lives of persons making significant contributions in Rockville, Montgomery County, or national history; do not possess architectural significance; and do not retain the integrity to embody the distinctive characteristics of a particular style, period or method of construction. The buildings lack those qualities of significance and integrity to merit further consideration as Historic Districts.

Please contact either Kathryn Kuranda or myself if you have any questions.

We are at your service.

Sincerely,



Dean A. Doerrfeld
Senior Project Manager

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